

Mr. Victor Navasky
The Nation
72 Fifth Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10011

11/12/87

Dear Mr. Navasky,

Instead of asking you to forward a sealed letter to Ring Lardner, Jr., whose letter appears in the issue dated 11/14/87, I write him through you on the chance that new information in it may be of interest in the matter of the never fully told story of the Hollywood Ten.

Both Patricia Bosworth and Mr. Lardner fall short of describing Mr. Edward Dmytryk's role and, in my efforts to try to locate what Mr. Dmytryk stole from me when I was asked to help the Ten before they testified before the House UnAmericans, I learned what Mr. Lardner does not report in his explanation of the principled position taken by the Ten.

I had researched a book on the UnAmericans, gotten into a fight with them when they tried to frame me, got their agent convicted on several criminal charges and was myself exculpated by a grand jury when World War II and the need to make a living made me lay that book aside.

Before then I had been a Senate investigator and editor (Civil Liberties Committee) and when Mr. Dmytryk came to see me immediately before their testimony I was still an intelligence analyst, to the best of my recollection. Or back in news reporting. He was brought by Charles Kramer, who had been a Senate investigator with me. The purpose of their visit was to get from my files material they could use in their defense. Its return was promised, I did not withhold anything and did not watch their search, and they left with cartons of records. I know this include many bound volumes of mounted clippings about the HUAC from major and minor papers and what enabled me to defeat the committee and get its agent indicted, a copy of all the records of all the committee's expenditures, copied from the records of the Clerk of the House. This, of course, was invaluable material. I don't think anyone else had ever done anything like that. It told an irrefutable story of the committee's many dishonesties some of which I believe were criminal.

All that Mr. Lardner says about Mr. Dmytryk, who was a stoolpidgeon in their midst, is that he gave the committee 26 names and was able to continue working.

Whatever he led the other nine and the lawyers to believe, Mr. Dmytryk was a fink and a crook. In later correspondence, he was also a liar. If he had not been others of the Ten would have known of this valuable material they could have used in their defense, if not exactly as I did perhaps, but those who I was able to write had no knowledge of either it or the alleged effort to prepare a defense. These include Alvah Bessie, Alvert Maltz and Dalton Trumbo, in addition to Mr. Dmytryk.

I enclose a copy of Mr. Dmytryk's false and evasive letter to me claiming no revocation at all and misrepresenting the endeavor in addition. There is no way he could have forgotten a night spent in pulling all those cartons out from a dormer closet, which had him on his knees for long periods of time, or going over all that material to decide what he wanted. It had nothing to do with writing an article, the last thing in his mind, certainly, when he was about to testify, particularly under the agreed conditions of that testimony.

Those conditions are not in Mr. Lardner's letter, perhaps because of space limitations, perhaps because he forgot. Unless Alvah Bessie didn't know what he was talking about. The length and nature of the correspondence between Mr. Bessie and me and the detail he provided make me believe he did know what he was talking about. In summary, it is that the Ten decided to stand on the First Amendment only and, specifically, not to take the Fifth Amendment or any other.